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ABSTRACT

This module discusses the roles of special education and vocational education in the critical skills to be taught for employability. Support services, coordination, and follow-up procedures are discussed. Six definitions, Missouri's LINC Transition Model, 6 references, and 22 bibliographic resources are provided. Appendix A describes the federal role in transition from school to work. Appendix B provides a sample transition checklist. (CML)

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TITLE: TRANSITION FROM SCHOOL TO WORK

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Revised 1989-90

ABSTRACT: The role of special education and vocational education is discussed regarding the critical skills to be taught for employability. The support services available as well as coordination and follow-up procedures are also discussed. A list of references and resources is included.

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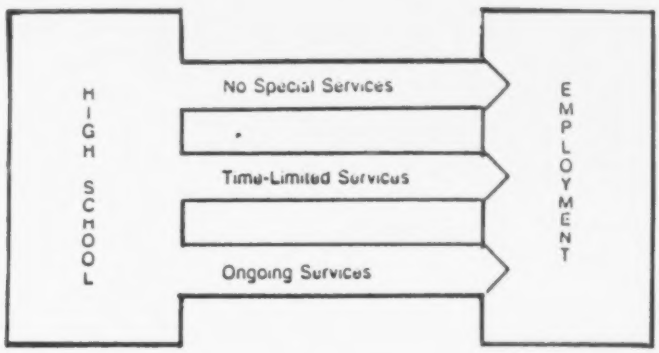
TRANSITION FROM SCHOOL TO WORK

Overview

The office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) has set transition from school to work as one of four national priorities in the next decade. High unemployment rates among the handicapped (Hippolitus, 1980) has warranted OSERS concern. Madeline Will, former Assistant Secretary of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, outlined OSERS view of transition by using the following model (Will, 1984).



Major Components of the Transition Process

This model illustrates the necessity of transition programs in high school in order to build a firm foundation. Once students leave high school, they can take one of three paths to employment. The path taken by individuals will depend on their specific needs and abilities and the amount of support services required to help them make a smooth transition. After individuals have been employed they may require follow-up services to assure that they adapt to the job. Components and support services necessary to implement this model will be discussed in this packet.

Definitions/Terminology

Computerized Vocational Objectives	Skills/objectives which are appropriate for the IEP in the vocational area.
Employability Skills	Skills beyond technical skills which employers consider most desirable.
Access Skills	Skills identified by vocational and special educators which will enhance a handicapped student's chance for success.

Generalizable Skills	Basic to, necessary for success in, and transferrable or common within and/or across secondary vocational training program areas and programs.
Life Centered Career Education Competencies	Skills in daily living, personal-social and occupationally related areas.
Transition from School to Work	The period of time that includes high school, the point of graduation, additional postsecondary education or adult services and the initial years in employment.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. HOW DOES CURRENT LEGISLATION RELATE TO THE TRANSITION PRIORITY?

A. Through lobbying, litigation and/or advocacy many changes have been made in the laws as well as the perceptions of the general public regarding individuals with handicaps. New opportunities have been created for students with disabilities that allow them to adjust to the community and lead a more normal life. Current legislation has provided a means whereby the person with a disability can gain training needed for a particular occupation as well as preventing deliberate discrimination on the part of an employer. Current legislation has opened more opportunities for employment and provides for the development of skills necessary for transition to independent living.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Public Law 93-112, is the civil rights law for all individuals with disabilities and has several ramifications in terms of transition for these individuals. The mandates of the legislation that relate to transition from school to work of the individual with a handicap include:

1. accessibility to federally funded buildings and activities held in these facilities;

2. availability of a free, appropriate, and nondiscriminatory public education including postsecondary education; and

3. nondiscriminatory employment.

Public Law 94-142, the Education of all Handicapped Children Act, and its amendments Public Law 98-199, are an integral

part of the transition process for an individual with a disability. This legislation provides for the secondary education and transition services for these youth through the Individualized Education Program. The IEP is the means whereby an educational program is developed specifically to meet the needs of the student. The goals of each IEP should ultimately result in the development of skills that are needed to enable the individual to adjust to the community and obtain employment. Through the IEP, the parents and student can work cooperatively with the local educational agency to develop the best transition services for the student.

Besides providing education and transition services at the secondary level, Public Law 98-199 also authorizes funding for research, training and demonstration pertinent to the transition process. The amendment addresses services in the following areas:

1. development of transition strategies and techniques that may lead to independent living;

2. establishment of demonstration models emphasizing vocational, transition, and job placement services;

3. provision of demographic studies on numbers and types of handicapping conditions of students and services required;

4. initiation of collaborative models between education agencies and adult service agencies; and

5. development of procedures for evaluation of programs in the area of transition.

Public Law 98-524 has a major impact on the transition of an individual with a disability from school to work. The Carl D. Perkins Act addresses the training needs of these students. The services guaranteed the individual are:

1. assessment of interests, abilities and special needs;

2. provision for counseling and career guidance by trained counselors;

3. early entry into a program if appropriate for employability;

4. notification to the student and parents about opportunities and options available to them by the time the student is in the 9th grade; and

5. inclusion of vocational services as a component of a student's IEP. (See Appendix A for additional information on the federal role in transition from school to work.)

Q. WHAT SKILLS CAN SPECIAL EDUCATORS TEACH STUDENTS TO SMOOTH THEIR TRANSITION FROM SCHOOL TO WORK?

A. There are many employability skills that special educators can teach students. Employability skills are sometimes referred to as generalizable or transferrable skills which will assist students in preparation for the world of work.

A 1984 University of Missouri-Columbia study asked employers and educators in Missouri to prioritize the components of vocational education (Miller, West, Ryan, et. al, 1984). Following is a table showing how the five components were ranked.

Component	Employer Ranking	Educator Ranking
Work Attitude and Human Relation Skills	1	1
Vocational-Technical Knowledge	2	2
Academic (Basic Skills)	4	3
Communication Skills	3	4
Work Experience	5	5

Vocational-technical knowledge, a job specific component, was ranked second in importance by both employers and educators. Most of the other components listed would be considered non-specific employability skills. It is these skills that can be infused into the curriculum taught by special educators.

Other skills needed to help with a smooth transition from school to work would be in the areas of daily living, personal-social and occupationally related components. These, also, could be taught by infusing them into the existing curriculum. Sources for listings of employability skills can be found in the reference section of this packet.

Q. WHAT SKILLS CAN VOCATIONAL EDUCATORS TEACH STUDENTS TO HELP SMOOTH THEIR TRANSITION FROM SCHOOL TO WORK?

A. Vocational educators should teach the employability skills discussed in the last question in the context of their vocational area, thus helping students to transfer what is being taught in the classroom to a work setting. Beyond generalizable skills, vocational educators must teach skills specific to their occupational area. This combination of skills would ideally allow students to leave school with not only general work skills but more specific job related skills. The general work skills will help students to keep a job whereas the job specific skills will help the student to get a job.

Q. SHOULD TRANSITION SKILLS BE TAUGHT ONLY AT THE SECONDARY LEVEL?

A. Although a greater emphasis may be placed on employability skills and job specific skills at the secondary level they should be taught throughout life. The Life Centered Career Competencies (Brolin, 1989) are designed to be taught throughout an individual's life.

In addition, the Missouri LINC Transition Model (see page 6A) provides a sequence beginning in primary school that focuses on career awareness. Career awareness begins with assessment of students in areas of health and daily living, personal and social, academic/basic skills and career information (Missouri Transition Guide, 1985).

Teaching transition skills in the elementary grades gives students a firm foundation on which to build the more specific transition skills taught at the secondary level. This is crucial because many of the skills taught at the secondary level rely on the acquisition of skills at an earlier age. For example, being able to communicate with supervisors relies on a persons general communication skills which have been fostered throughout life.

Q. WHY ARE JOB PLACEMENT AND FOLLOW-UP PROCEDURES NEEDED TO ASSIST SPECIAL NEEDS STUDENTS?

A. Even though many special needs students have practiced job finding skills while in school, they may still need assistance when applying the skills to the real world. While job placement counselors help individuals find jobs, they can also check on student's progress once placed on the job. This gives individuals with special needs a support system that will help them adjust to their job, thus, helping to smooth their transition from school to work.

MISSOURI LINC'S TRANSITION MODEL

Goal	Phase I Career Awareness (Grades K-6)	Phase II Vocational Exploration (Grades 7-8-9)	Phase III Vocational Preparation (Grades 9-10)	Phase IV Skill Training and Placement (Grades 10-11-12)	Phase V Post-School Transition (Beyond 12th Grade)
Assessment	Health/Daily Living Personal-Social/Adaptive Behavior Academic/Basic Skills Career Information	Entry Level Skills Personal-Social/Adaptive Behavior Academic/Basic Skills Interest Inventories	Interest Inventories Entry Level Skills Personal-Social/Adaptive Behavior Curriculum Needs and Modifications Special Services Career Counseling	Vocational Assessment Occupational Skills Assessment Personal Characteristics Job Seeking Techniques Special Services Career Counseling	Vocational Assessment Employability Skills Assessment Independent Living Skills Assessment Career Counseling
Curriculum	Life Centered Career Education · Daily Living Skills · Personal Social Skills · Occupational Guidance and Preparation Skills Academic/Basic Skills	Entry Level Skills Generalizable Skills Life Centered Career Education Skills Academic/Basic Skills	Occupational Orientation Vocational Preparation Entry Level Skills Generalizable Skills Life Centered Career Education Skills Academic/Basic Skills	Vocational Instructional Management System (VIMS) Employability Skills Life Centered Career Education Skills Independent Living Skills Academic/Basic Skills	Advanced Training Vocational Training/Re-training Employability Skills Independent Living Skills
Programming	Mainstream Resource Services Self Contained Classroom Field Trips Parent Participation	Mainstream in Pre-vocational Classes Resource Services Field Trips Parent Participation	Mainstream in Prevocational Classes Resource Services Field Trips Vocational Preparation Classes Business & Industry Involvement Job Shadowing Parent Participation	Early Entry to Vocational Education Mainstream Area Vocational Technical Schools or Comprehensive High Schools Vocational Resource Educator (VRE) Vocational Adjustment Coordinator (VAC) Supplemental Teacher Basic Skills Instructor Business & Industry Partnerships Cooperative Occupational Education (COE) Cooperative School Work Study Vocational Student Organization Referral to Vocational Rehabilitation Referral to Job Training & Partnership Act Programs (JTPA) Referral to Job Service Parent Participation	Without Special Services · Independent Job Seeking Time Limited Services · Counselor/Teacher/Coordinator Placement Assistance · Referral to Vocational Rehabilitation & Rehabilitation Facilities · Referral to Job Training & Partnership Act Programs (JTPA) · Referral to Job Service Ongoing Services · Supported Work · Sheltered Workshops · Adult Service Providers Parent Participation
Sample IEP Goals	Student will exhibit appropriate work habits and behavior.	Student will complete at least one prevocational course.	Student will identify his/her strengths and weaknesses for vocational education.	Student will develop strategies to obtain written information.	Student will receive services of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation.
Sample IEP Objectives	Student will complete tasks working alone with minimum teacher supervision. Student will complete tasks working with three other students	Student will use tools and equipment with 100% accuracy in the industrial arts course. Student will measure accurately to 1/16th inch with a tape measure.	Student will list his/her aptitudes and achievements. Student will complete a vocational assessment Student will select a vocational option using interest, aptitudes, and achievement information.	Student will define 25 out of 30 vocabulary words in occupational field. Student will read and interpret output measuring equipment.	Student will participate in vocational assessment and work adjustment services. Student will participate in job placement services

Job placement counselors can also be valuable resource persons to employers. Employers may not be aware of the many financial benefits related to hiring individuals with disabilities. It is the responsibility of job placement counselors to provide employers with information regarding these benefits.

Q. WHAT IS SUPPORTED WORK?

A. Supported work stresses the integration of individuals with disabilities into competitive employment. Rather than placing individuals at jobs and "hoping" they succeed, support is provided for the individuals as they make the transition. Supported work includes the following components: (a) the community is first surveyed to identify possible job placements and their associated social and vocational survival skills; (b) community-based, (nonsheltered) training sites are established within actual community work settings whereby potential employees (students) are taught to perform the skills necessary for actual employment; (c) once the individual is trained in the community work setting (i.e., the nonsheltered training site), he/she is placed into a targeted job within a 6-month period; and (d) training and long-term follow-up of decreasing intensity is provided to facilitate maintenance of acquired skills in addition to training skills unique to the new employment site. Supported work model programs that share these common components have been developed as part of high school and rehabilitation programs across the country (Rusch, 1986).

Q, WHAT ADULT SUPPORT SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE TO SPECIAL NEEDS INDIVIDUALS?

A. There are a wide variety of agencies that can offer support to special needs individuals. Following is a listing of just some of the agencies:

-Adult Basic Education Programs;
-Association of Retarded Citizens;
-Division of Vocational Rehabilitation;
-Federal Job Information Center;
-Governor's Committee on Employment of Persons with Disabilities;
-Independent Living Agencies;
-Job Accommodation Network (JAN);
-Job Center;
-JOBS - National Alliance of Businessmen (local);
-Job Placement Counselors in Local School District;
-Missouri Division of Family Services;
-National Council on Crime and Delinquency;
-Planned Parenthood;
-Private Job Placement Agencies;
-Salvation Army; and
-Urban League (state, local).

Q. HOW CAN SCHOOL DISTRICT STAFF COORDINATE PROGRAMS THAT HELP STUDENTS WITH THE TRANSITION FROM SCHOOL TO WORK?

A. While a student is in school, programs that are necessary to teach the student transition skills can be coordinated in the individualized education plan (IEP) or individualized vocational education program (IVEP). Transitional goals and objectives can be written into the IEP/IVEP and the responsibility for teaching the goals assigned to the appropriate personnel.

Coordination of services, once a student has graduated, is more difficult. The best way to facilitate this coordination is to educate parents and students as to what services are available. If possible, it would be helpful if the initial meeting of parents, students and outside agency representatives could be organized by the special educator.

The local education agency can enter into cooperative agreements with other agencies who provide transition services. These agreements generally state the responsibilities of each agency. This ensures that appropriate services will be provided for the special needs student and costly duplication of services is eliminated. (For further information, Missouri LINC has a module on cooperative agreements.)

By appointing a Transition Task Force or a steering committee, organizational and planning efforts can be more effective by using a set of guidelines, such as those listed here or any other list of topics which will set the direction for the task force to effectively design transition program efforts. Some possible participants for a Transition Task Force would include representatives from the following constituencies:

*special education;
*vocational education;
*vocational rehabilitation;
*guidance;
*administration;
*support services;
*community
*human services;
*parents; and
*other related agencies.

Regularly scheduled meetings of the Transition Task Force are a key to successful designing (and implementing) of transition. Without continued momentum and a sense of purpose, efforts to fuse various disciplines together for a common goal will likely dissolve. A collaborative effort, such as transition, requires persistence, cooperation, and determination. Without regularly scheduled task force

meetings, the factors involved in building a team will diminish and eventually collapse. It is particularly critical to have regularly scheduled meetings in the early stages of designing transition programs in order to become a well established team. A sustained effort to accomplish the implementation activities must be made (West, 1988).

Q. HOW CAN A TRANSITION PROGRAM BE STARTED IN A LOCAL EDUCATION AGENCY (LEA)?

A. West (1987), wrote that designing transition programs is a complex task. It requires individuals who understand the philosophy of transition and can organize a program requiring cooperation from special education, vocational education, vocational rehabilitation, and other human services providers, as well as a host of other individuals, such as parents, employers, and community representatives (p. 130).

West (1987) developed a set of guidelines for educators who are in the process of designing transition programs for special needs students. The guidelines are intended for local education agencies involved in the initial stages of designing transition programs. They are:

1. Select the definition and philosophy of transition which best meets the needs of the local educational agency (LEA);
2. Develop an outline of program options, curriculum options and the support services which are available to students in the LEA;
3. Determine voids in curriculum and program options (as they relate to transition;
4. Develop options to fill the voids;
5. Identify personnel who will be involved in all components of the transition efforts;
6. Organize inservice for appropriate personnel involved in transition efforts;
7. Select and/or develop materials needed for transition efforts;
8. Determine activities for transition efforts;
9. Outline a transition implementation plan for the LEA;
10. Assign specific responsibilities and timelines for each activity identified in the plan;
11. Conduct transition activities;
12. Evaluate transition services;
13. Determine the impact of transition activities and the actual impact on student's transition to employment;
14. Identify and examine transition alternatives/options not previously explored by the LEA; and
15. Plan future transition efforts identified by the evaluations (p. 132).

Q. DOES THE MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION PROVIDE ANY SUPPORT FOR TRANSITION?

A. DESE does support the concept of transition and views its implementation as a priority. In order to secure funds districts can consider using their Comprehensive System of Personal Development (CSPD). This money can be used to send people to conferences on transition, support guest speakers on transition, provide release time to revise the curriculum and visit other districts with successful transition programs already in place. Federal money is also available and can be secured by submitting a request for proposal (RFP). For specifics on the process check with district personnel in charge of grant applications.

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Federal Role in Transition from School to Work

dandating that a priority be placed on transition and employment of persons with severe disabilities, OSERS and the ADD have increased financial grants and contracts for the improvement and/or development of secondary employment training programs and an array of supported employment options. Key elements in funded programs are: (a) interagency cooperation, (b) community-based job training, and (c) integration with non-handicapped peers. This article outlines major funded programs and describes their features.

1) ***Transition of Youth with Disabilities Priority — Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services; U.S. Department of Education***

- Establishes transition from school to working life for all individuals with disabilities as a national priority
- Maintains that the outcome of education and transition is sustained employment through an array of services:
  - high school foundation offering an integrated, community-based, functional curriculum
  - coordinated efforts among school and adult service providers to assure a smooth transition
  - combination of work options with the support necessary for employment retention

2) ***Supported Employment Initiative — Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services; U.S. Department of Education***

- Defines supported employment by four characteristics:
  - is designed for individuals typically served in day activity programs and who, because of the severity of the disability, are not served by vocational rehabilitation
  - involves the continuing provision of training, supervision, and support services
  - is designed to produce the same benefits received by others and considered to be normal measures of employment quality: i.e., income level, quality of working life
  - incorporates flexibility in support strategies to assist individuals in obtaining and performing work
- Provides funding to assist states in converting traditional day activity programs to alternative supported employment methods

3) ***Employment Initiative — Administration on Developmental Disabilities, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; Office of Human Development Services***

- Establishes employment of persons with developmental disabilities as a funding priority
- Supports the concept of the private sector as the primary source of competitive jobs for persons with developmental disabilities
- Provides for a national public awareness campaign to businesses to increase interest in employing persons with developmental disabilities

4) ***Education of the Handicapped Act Amendments of 1983 (P.L. 98-199) — Section 626***

- Provides for secondary education and transition services for handicapped youth ages 12-22
- Authorizes funding for research, training and demonstration in the following areas:
  - development of strategies and techniques for transition to independent living
  - establishment of demonstration models emphasizing vocational, transitional, and job placement services
  - provision of demographic studies on numbers and types of handicapping conditions of students and services required
  - initiation of collaborative models between education agencies and adult service agencies
  - development of procedures for evaluation of programs in the area of transition

5) ***Carl D. Perkins Vocation Education Act of 1984 (P.L. 98-524)***

- Maintains that 10 percent of State's formula grant allotment under Part A be used to provide vocational education to handicapped individuals, as additional cost over regular vocational education expenditures
- Mandates that every student with disabilities and his/her parents be informed of vocational education opportunities available in school one year before vocational education services are provided in school or by ninth grade
- Assures that students with disabilities have equal access to services through vocational education when appropriate, as indicated in the I.E.P. Services may include:

Source: Project TIE, Rehabilitation Research & Training Center, Vol 1, No. 1, 1986.

SAMPLE TRANSITION CHECKLIST

1. Which functional curriculums are used to assist in transition?

___ 1. career education
___ 2. pre-vocational training
___ 3. entry level skills training
___ 4. vocational programs
___ 5. on-the-job training
___ 6. cooperative school work program
___ 7. others, please list
_____
_____

2. What support personnel are available to assist with transition?

___ 1. vocational adjustment coordinator
___ 2. vocational resource educator
___ 3. basic skills instructor
___ 4. supplemental teacher
___ 5. educational resource teacher
___ 6. guidance counselors
___ 7. vocational evaluator
___ 8. others, please list
_____
_____

3. Who in your district is responsible for transition goals and objectives within the IEP/ITP?

___ 1. special educators
___ 2. vocational resource educator
___ 3. counselor
___ 4. vocational adjustment coordinator
___ 5. vocational evaluator
___ 6. special education director
___ 7. other, please list
_____
_____

4. Which areas of transition are addressed during planning?

___ 1. transportation
___ 2. residential placement
___ 3. recreation options
___ 4. job placement/follow-up
___ 5. extended employment
___ 6. health services
___ 7. income support
___ 8. on-the-job training
___ 9. others, please list
_____
_____

5. What has been done to increase employment opportunities for the handicapped?

___ 1. provided placement assistance
___ 2. provided work-experience
___ 3. taught pre-employment skills
___ 4. provided follow-up for students who obtain a job
___ 5. assisted students infinding other support services
___ 6. others, please list
_____
_____

6. How are independent living skills necessary for transition developed?

___ 1. provide training in social skills
___ 2. provide transportation options
___ 3. develop daily living skills
___ 4. provide transition into residential or group homes
___ 5. provide counseling/guidance
___ 6. others, please list
_____
_____

7. Which agencies have been used and/or contacted to assist in the transition process?

___ 1. Vocational Rehabilitation
___ 2. Division of Mental Retardation & Developmental Disabilities
___ 3. Bureau of the Blind
___ 4. Private Industry Council (Human Development Corporation)
___ 5. Private Rehabilitation Facilities
___ 6. Association of Retarded Citizens
___ 7. United Cerebral Palsy
___ 8. others, please list
_____
_____

8. Who do you provide transition training and/or inservice for?

___ 1. parents
___ 2. teachers
___ 3. employers
___ 4. students
___ 5. other agencies
___ 6. others, please list
_____
_____

9. What has been done to increase awareness/ utilization of other agencies involved in transition?

___ 1. developed cooperative agreements
___ 2. invited to IEP meetings
___ 3. had students/parents visit facilities
___ 4. had educators visit facilities
___ 5. had them provide inservice
___ 6. others, please list
_____
_____

10. Which vocational training programs are available in your district?

___ 1. area vocational technical school
___ 2. comprehensive high school
___ 3. on-the-job training
___ 4. cooperative school work program
___ 5. other, please list
_____
_____

(trans.lst:2)